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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

RECENT ACTIVITIES IN NORTH VIETNAM

(7-13 OCTOBER 1968)

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
15 October 1968

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Recent Activities in North Vietnam
(7-13 October 1968)

Summary

North Vietnam's industrial repair efforts may be shifting from temporary repairs to permanent reconstruction. Plans or actual restoration activities are apparently under way at the Haiphong Cement Plant, the Thanh Hoa and the Nam Dinh Powerplants, and the Haiphong Shipyard West.

Construction activities continue at a rapid pace throughout the country. Repairs and new construction have been detected on the POL pipeline in the Panhandle, including a short segment near roads leading to Mu Gia Pass. Improvements to the road system in the northeast will permit better access to China and supply depots along the border.

A substantial volume of supplies continued to move in the Panhandle. Rail traffic between the 19th and 20th Parallels continued unabated, and substantial rail movements south of the 19th Parallel are being maintained despite the bombings. Watercraft activity continued at a high level,

Note: This memorandum was produced solely by CIA. It was prepared jointly by the Office of Economic Research and the Office of Current Intelligence and was coordinated with the Director's Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs.

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and for the first time in several months LCM's were deployed south of the 20th Parallel. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Much of the movement in September, however, was related to a southward shift of storage facilities within the Panhandle rather than to the movement of goods to the war zones [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Truck sightings [REDACTED] remained at a low level for the sixth straight week, but considerable truck activity was masked by poor weather.

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[REDACTED] two additional SAM units may have taken up positions close to the 19th Parallel.

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South of the 20th Parallel

Logistics Facilities

1. New construction is under way on the POL pipeline in the Panhandle. At Cu Dai, the present northern terminus, a new line has been installed, probably because of the considerable bomb damage recently inflicted on the original line at this point. Near Linh Cam, a second new segment of pipeline is under construction.

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[redacted] is headed in the general direction of the Linh Cam ferry, a key water transshipment point. Adjacent to the junction of Routes 15 and 152 [redacted] leads northward from the vicinity of a POL storage site that probably serves truck traffic headed for Mu Gia Pass.

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2. A new and large petroleum storage complex [redacted] is located only 12 miles southwest of Thanh Hoa on an access road leading to Route 704. The area contains about 70 covered POL emplacements of undetermined size.

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Rail Activity

3. The North Vietnamese continue to actively use the rail line between the 19th and 20th Parallels. At Tu My, one-half mile north of the 19th Parallel, a rail-to-road transshipment area bombed out of operation in mid-September was back in operation by the end of the month. At Cho Giat/Tho Trang and Qui Vinh, two other important rail-to-road transshipment areas 10 and 20 miles north of the bombing area, respectively, rail activity continued with only slight declines in the numbers of cars observed. At Thanh Hoa, a large number of rail cars were observed in the rail yard on 30 September; construction of a rail ferry bypass north of the yard is nearing completion and a new transshipment area has been completed in the northern part of the yard.

4. Evidence of extensive rail movements south of the 19th Parallel continues to mount. Eleven additional flatcars have been observed at Vinh, bringing the total number of railroad cars recently noted there to 50. Rail activity at Vinh had been dormant since late June [redacted]

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movable rail span has been used to move traffic during the night. A partially hidden rail spur which apparently serves as a holding area for traffic moving south has also been detected near Dien Chau. At Tam Da, a large railroad car ferry has been constructed for shuttling rail cars and truck locomotives across the river. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] The tramway south of Vinh shows continued efforts to repair bomb damage and to rebuild many of the smaller bridges. There are indications of heavy use of the tramway south of Bai Duc Thom, a key supply area on Route 15 about 25 miles north of Mu Gia.

Truck Traffic

[REDACTED] vehicle sightings and truck destruction dropped below last week's already low levels and for the sixth consecutive week remained well below the averages noted since 1 April. Poor weather over all portions of the Panhandle throughout the week again hampered air observation. [REDACTED] reports of truck sightings, however, suggest that truck activity is considerably greater than that reflected in the tabulation below:

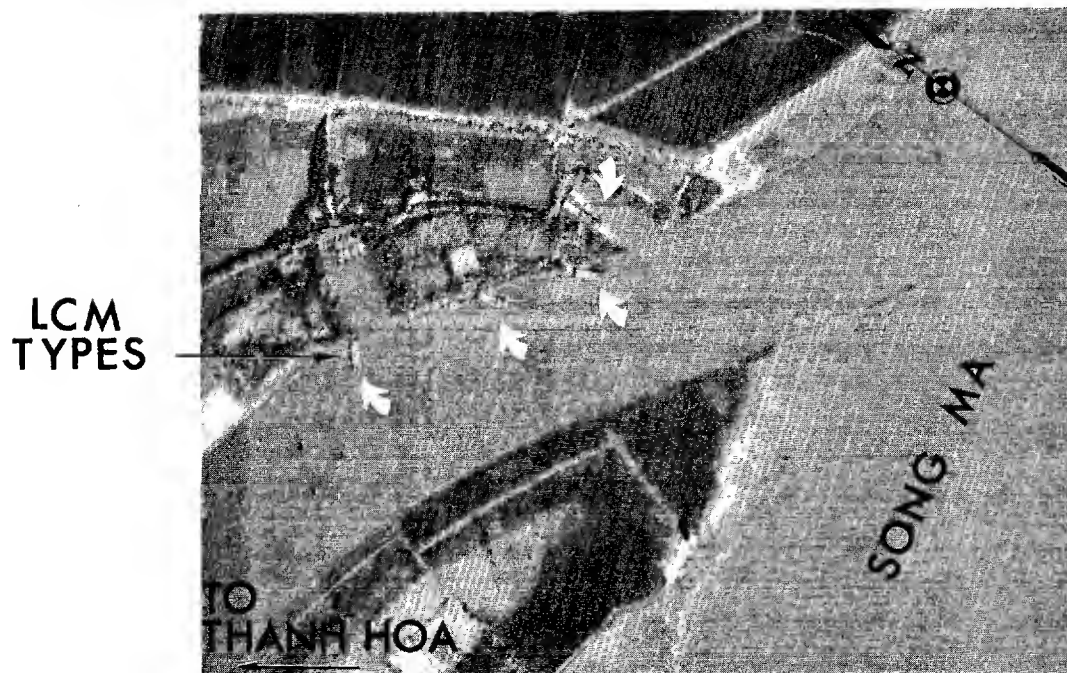
	<u>Trucks</u>			
	<u>Sighted</u>	<u>De- stroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>	<u>Effective Losses a/</u>
This week (7-13 Oct)	254	61	29	53
Last week (30 Sep- 6 Oct)	349	110	37	92
Weekly average (since 1 Apr)	628	116	71	105

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6. Two convoys of moderate size were detected this week. About 25 trucks were sighted on the night of 11 October on Route 107 near Quang Khe. Another convoy of about 20 trucks was sighted during the night of 13 October moving southward along coastal Route 1A several miles south of Vinh. Vehicle activity along coastal highway routes, principally 1A, was again greater than that noted along the coast during the spring and summer.

Watercraft

7. Watercraft activity in the Panhandle continued at a high level. The Viet Yen transshipment point on the Song Ma, about three miles southeast of Thanh Hoa, was particularly active, and across the river from Viet Yen, six of North Vietnam's approximately 30 LCM's were sighted for the first time since April south of the 20th Parallel. Prior to this sighting, LCM's had been



WATERCRAFT ACTIVITY ON THE SONG MA

THE FIRST REPORT OF LCM'S OPERATING AT THANH HOA
WAS NOTED IN THE ABOVE PHOTOGRAPHY.
THE CRAFT APPEAR TO BE SOVIET-BUILT T-4 LCM'S,
WHICH HAVE A CAPACITY OF 40 TONS AND A LOADED SPEED
OF ABOUT 7 KNOTS.

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observed primarily in the Hanoi-Haiphong area. Forty small logistic craft were noted on 3 October at Dien Luat on the Song Bang near the southern terminus of the Kenh Me; this area contained only one small craft when last observed on 17 September. South of the 19th Parallel, pilots reported the heaviest level of watercraft activity in 10 weeks, particularly on the rivers leading to Quang Khe (the Nguon Nay and Song Troc), and around Quang Khe itself.

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Air and Air Defense Operations

10. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] SAM defenses between the 19th and 20th Parallels may have been strengthened by the addition of a third firing battalion and by the possible shift of two battalions from the Thanh Hoa area to sites closer to the 19th Parallel. The deployment of two battalions to sites near the 19th Parallel would expand North Vietnam's SAM coverage of the area currently being bombed from the five units estimated to be south of the 19th Parallel to a possible seven battalions.

North of the 20th Parallel

Industry

11. North Vietnam's industrial repair efforts seem to be assuming the characteristics of permanent reconstruction programs. Rumania has signed a \$2.3 million aid contract involving a cement factory -- probably the repair of the damaged facilities at the Haiphong Cement Plant. [REDACTED]

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25X1 [REDACTED] The partly restored Nam Dinh Powerplant was shut down during the entire month of September, perhaps to permit major repair work on that facility. This plant had been supplying steam for textile-finishing operations, a function that is now being performed by a repaired steam plant within the grounds of the Nam Dinh Textile Plant. At least one year will be required for completion of each of the above projects. Major repairs also are under way at Haiphong Shipyard West; one of the two graving docks is now in use and the other is in the initial stages of repair. Haiphong West is the first of four damaged boat repair facilities in Haiphong to undergo repairs. Minor repairs continue to be made at a number of other industrial installations, but little perceptible progress has been made during the past two months.

Construction

12. The North Vietnamese are making significant improvements to road connections with Communist China and to the extensive storage areas along the border [REDACTED]

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25X1 [REDACTED] A new 175-foot, two-span concrete-deck bridge has been built on Route 1B near Lang Son over the Song Ky Cung River and will supplement an adjacent four-span bridge. The North Vietnamese have also built a 2.8-mile road section a short distance west of the new bridge that heads southeast toward Route 1A. The new branch road, when finished, will connect Route 1B with Route 1A southwest of Lang Son and will permit road traffic from Communist China to bypass the congested Lang Son area. Another road, at present six miles long, is under construction southeast of Lang Son. This road segment may be intended either to shorten and straighten the road link between Lang Son and Hanoi or to alleviate the heavy traffic that may develop when Route 1A is connected to Route 1B southwest of Lang Son.

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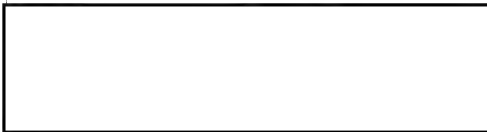
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